

Therapy for Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

JEFFREY & REBEKAH PROCTOR



Peace and Harmony
COUNSELING



About Us

Jeffrey:

- LPC in Texas

Specializations:

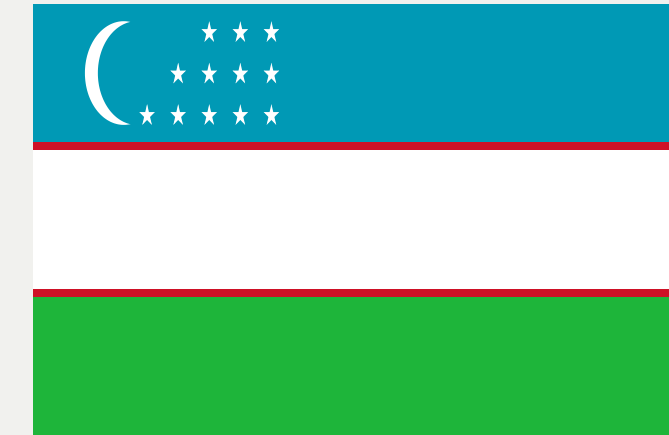
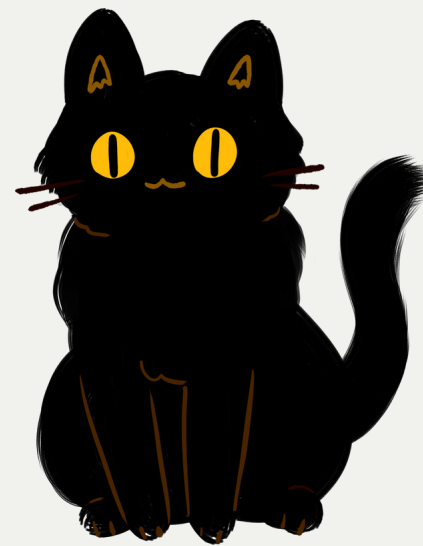
- Teens with Trauma and ADHD
- Christian Spiritual Development
- Third Culture Kids

Rebekah:

- Life Coach, TCK Debriefing, Spiritual Director

Specializations:

- TCKs and Adult TCKs
- Christian Spiritual Development



What is a TCK?



The Definition

"A person who has spent a significant part of their first 18 years of life accompanying parents into a country or countries that are different from at least one parent's passport countries due to a parent's choice of work or advanced training. The TCK frequently builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture may be assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is (often) in relationship with others of a similar background." (Dave Pollock and Ruth Van Reken)



Examples of Third Culture Kids

Military BRATS

If the child moves with their parent to bases outside of the passport country and interacts with the culture outside of base. Also interacts with military culture.

Missionary Kids

Often referred to as MK's. Missionary kids also deal with the Christian culture of the missionary company.

Business Expat kids

Parent's work for multinational corporations or have their own business outside of the passport country. May interact with company culture



Grief Tower

"TCKs accumulate more grief and loss in their first eighteen years of life than most mono-cultured individuals do in a lifetime."
(Lauren Wells)



What are blocks of the grief tower?

- Losses
- Intense moments of fear
- Seasons of prolonged anxiety/depression
- Family crises
- Other significant Grief inducing events



Hidden losses for Third Culture Kids

- Loss of knowing what's expected of you
- Loss of your status
- Knowing that your best friend has a new friend
- Loss of familiar smells
- Loss of knowing the rules



TCKs often feel misunderstood

TCKs often feel as if no one understands them whether they are talking to people from their hos country or passport country. TCKs often only feel understood by other TCKs because their experience is so unique, even if they were all in different countries in different circumstances. This third culture of being in between worlds is what can make them feel lonely.



Why TCKS hesitate to acknowledge their blocks?

- The difficult experiences are often surrounded by so much good
- The TCK life can look beautiful from the outside
- It is "normal"
- They have been surrounded by poverty and hardship



Examples of Blocks from Rebekah

1. Five countries I called "Home," and 8 house moves
2. I wasn't fluent in Arabic or Turkish
3. Saying goodbye to friends from every country
4. People's lack of understanding of each country's culture
5. Constantly adapting to each country and community's expectations
6. Syria destroyed



Other examples from Lauren Wells

1. Moving from California to Tanzania
2. Witnessing violence during the first week of Tanzania
3. Went back to America for a summer
4. Experiencing a funeral that involved screaming and wailing for days in the Maasai style
5. Two closest friends moved away
6. Leaving the country with only a few days notice
7. Started public school in California
8. Moved back to Africa and rarely talked about what happened in Tanzania



Some statistics of TCKS by TCK Training

- 90% feel "out of sync" with their peers as adults
- 44% report emotional abuse
- 20% report physical abuse
- 1/3 say they felt unloved and not special to their parents
- 80 % struggle with depression and anxiety as adults
- 42 % felt emotionally and/or physically neglected
- 72 % experienced a developmental trauma



Some things that help a TCK

Write a Timeline

Write down what emotions were felt and look for relational patterns

Process Grief

Process the grief for each season in their grief tower.

Be Humble

Learn about their life and don't make assumptions.



How to make a grief timeline for TCKs

1. Use an emotions worksheet
2. Write out your timeline
3. Add emotions to your timeline
4. Look at your timeline carefully and notice how you feel
5. Circle the hardest event and ask yourself why was that the hardest.
6. Write an R or a picture representing each block that involves a relationship



TCK skills can also help

Immigrants

**Parents who
adopt foreign
children**

**People who
have moved a
lot domestically**



Case Study!!

Client's name is John Eshonov. His father is Uzbek. His mother is American. He was raised in Russia and Spain. He is currently living in the United States, pursuing his Bachelor's in international business.

He has come to you feeling depressed. He says that he has no motivation to do school, but if he does not pass his classes, his mom and dad might decide to bring him back to Uzbekistan or Russia where he will live "a miserable existence."

He also reports that he needs more motivation to raise money because if he does not raise enough money, he can't pay for school and will have to move back to Russia or Uzbekistan anyway.

He has a limp leg. He is fluent in Russian, Uzbek, and English. Conversational in Turkish and can only speak enough Spanish for basic phrases like ordering food or asking where the bathroom is.

Any Questions?

**Connect with us
for more resources.**



Jeffrey Proctor LPC, & Rebekah Proctor



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